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Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Central African Republic

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to the request of the Security Council contained in its resolution 2088 (2013). It provides an update on the situation in the Central African Republic and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic (BINUCA). It covers the period from 3 May to 31 July 2013.

II. Update on major developments

A. Political situation

2. On 12 June, I announced my decision to appoint Lieutenant General (retd.) Babacar Gaye (Senegal) as my new Special Representative for the Central African Republic and Head of BINUCA, to replace Margaret Vogt (Nigeria), whose mandate ended on 6 July. My new Special Representative arrived in Bangui on 9 July, and has met with the heads of the transitional institutions and several representatives of the international community, including the Special Representative of the Mediator for the crisis in the Central African Republic appointed by the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), the President of the Congo, Denis Sassou Nguesso.

3. Since my last report, the overall political situation has been marked by increased divisions within the Séléka coalition. On 29 June, General Mohamed Moussa Dhaffane, until then a prominent Séléka leader, was arrested and dismissed from his post as Senior Minister for Water and Forests, on allegations of recruiting mercenaries. Intra-Séléka fighting ensued and partisans of General Dhaffane were reportedly expelled from Bangui. In addition, violent clashes among Séléka factions erupted in Bangassou on 15 July, leading the population to seek refuge in the bush.

4. There has been some progress in the implementation of the ECCAS decisions on the transitional arrangements. There is however no agreement yet on how to ensure full representation in the transitional institutions. On 13 May, the Prime Minister, Nicolas Tiangaye, issued a decree enlarging the National Transitional Council, which serves as Parliament, from 105 to 135 members. He increased the representation of the prefectures, political parties, civil society and women's

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organizations. However, the former presidential majority, arguing a lack of sufficient consultations, advocated for the cancellation of the decree. On 25 May, at the closing ceremony of its extraordinary session, the Chairman of the National Transitional Council called on all national stakeholders to demonstrate flexibility so as to allow the Council to start working in earnest. He also advised the Prime Minister to hold extensive consultations with all national stakeholders before appointing a new Government of National Unity.

5. The first meeting of the self-proclaimed President, Michel Djotodia, and the Follow-up Committee on the Libreville Agreements was held on 10 June. Discussions focused on the Transitional Charter and the cantonment of Séléka elements, as well as on issues relevant to the transition. The Follow-up Committee insisted on the formation of a more inclusive Government of National Unity, the re-election of the members of the Bureau of the National Transitional Council, and the need for extensive consultations in the drafting of the Transitional Charter. Mr. Djotodia and the Follow-up Committee agreed to meet on a monthly basis to share information and address contentious issues.

6. On 13 June, a new 34-member Government of National Unity was appointed with representatives of the five parties that attended the Libreville peace talks in January 2013. It includes nine Ministers from Séléka, seven from the former opposition parties, two partisans of former President François Bozizé, 16 members of civil society and other political parties and Mr. Djotodia as Minister of Defence. Five new ministries have been created: labour, employment, training and social security; public service and administrative reform; social economy and microfinance; promotion of arts and culture; and human rights and coordination of humanitarian action. Among the former ministers, 21 retained their portfolios while three have been reassigned to different ministries. According to observers, however, geographical balance within the Government remains to be achieved. Furthermore, the representation of women remains weak, with only three, albeit prominent, portfolios, including foreign affairs and rural development. The three women ministers are representatives of civil society.

7. Mistrust continues to characterize relations between the Prime Minister and Mr. Djotodia. On 5 July, the National Transitional Council adopted a draft Transitional Charter, which was signed and promulgated by Mr. Djotodia on 18 July. The Transitional Charter clarifies the separation of the executive, legislative and judicial powers. In the lead-up to its promulgation, the Prime Minister requested an emergency session of the Follow-up Committee on 16 July to exert pressure on Mr. Djotodia to sign the draft Transitional Charter. Prior to its adoption by the National Transitional Council, the draft Charter had been reviewed by national and international experts, with support from the United Nations standby team of mediation experts, during a workshop convened by the Follow-up Committee and facilitated by BINUCA, the European Union and the International Organization of La Francophonie.

8. Notwithstanding the progress made in the implementation of some ECCAS decisions, there remain areas of non-compliance by national actors and issues requiring additional discussion. On 21 June Mr. Djotodia announced that, contrary to the decision made by the ECCAS Heads of State, there would not be a rerun of the elections of the members of the Bureau of the National Transitional Council further to its enlargement to 135 members.

9. In addition, during the July session, the National Transitional Council discussed the ineligibility of key actors of the transition to run for the next general elections, including the Head of State of the Transition, the Prime Minister and members of the Government and the Council's Bureau. No consensus was reached on the issue and Bureau members agreed to consult the ECCAS Mediator, President Denis Sassou Nguesso. The debate centres on whether the ineligibility clause also applies to the legislative elections, or only to the presidential elections. There is also controversy about the start date for the 18-month transition process and the expected date for the elections. The African Union Peace and Security Commissioner indicated that the 18-month period should end in September 2014, whereas, at the national level, stakeholders seem to consider that the period should start only after all the transitional institutions have been set up.

10. An International Contact Group on the Central African Republic was established and held its inaugural meeting in Brazzaville on 3 May 2013 and its second meeting on 8 July in Addis Ababa. While the inaugural meeting adopted the Brazzaville Appeal, which established a trust fund to support the transition, the second meeting focused on the implementation of key provisions of the Libreville Agreements and of the decisions adopted by ECCAS and the African Union. The International Contact Group stressed the need for better cooperation between the institutions of the transition. It also underlined the need to provide the proposed African-led International Support Mission in the Central African Republic with a robust mandate and ensure a regional balance of troops. In addition, the International Contact Group urged the United Nations to consider how it could support and facilitate the deployment of the proposed mission. The International Contact Group agreed to hold its third meeting in Bangui as soon as possible, to discuss in particular economic and financial aspects of the transition, as well as the situation of refugees and internally displaced persons, the establishment of the mission and the different contributions to the trust fund. The Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs and both the outgoing and incoming Special Representatives for the Central African Republic participated in the second meeting of the International Contact Group.

11. While all regional stakeholders agree that the Libreville Agreements should be the basis for any political solution in the Central African Republic, divisions remain on how to proceed with their implementation. Despite the sanctions and travel ban imposed by the African Union, Mr. Djotodia undertook visits to Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea and the Sudan during the reporting period. In addition, he was invited to participate in a summit of Heads of State of the Central African Economic and Monetary Community (CEMAC) held in Libreville on 14 June.

12. During his visits in the region, Mr. Djotodia reiterated his commitment to abide by the decisions of the ECCAS summits on the Central African Republic and appealed for more assistance to help to stabilize the country. In the Sudan, President Omer al-Bashir promised to help the Central African authorities to boost their economy and address their security challenges, especially along the border with the Sudan and Chad. Meanwhile, the President of Burkina Faso, Blaise Compaoré, and the President of Benin, Boni Yayi, transmitted unequivocal messages to Mr. Djotodia encouraging him to work closely with the Prime Minister and to abide by his commitments to respect the Libreville Agreements and the N'Djamena Declaration.

13. In a regional effort to help to address the crisis in the Central African Republic, the Committee on Defence and Security of the Council for Peace and Security in Central Africa held an extraordinary meeting in Libreville, from 14 to 18 May, focused on the situation in the Central African Republic. The Committee agreed to send 1,300 troops to the Central African Republic, in addition to the 700 troops already on the ground. It also decided to extend until 2015 the mandate of the ECCAS peacekeeping force, the Mission for the Consolidation of Peace in the Central African Republic (MICOPAX).

14. The CEMAC Heads of State decided to grant CFAF 25 billion (approximately US$ 50 million) to help to strengthen the capacity of MICOPAX II to restore law and order in the Central African Republic. They also decided to maintain the CEMAC headquarters in Bangui, notwithstanding the current security concerns in the country.

15. On 19 July, my new Special Representative to the African Union briefed the African Union Peace and Security Council on the efforts of the United Nations system in the Central African Republic. The Peace and Security Council decided to authorize the deployment of the African-led International Support Mission in the Central African Republic, for an initial period of six months, at an overall strength of 3,652 personnel, including 2,475 military personnel and 1,025 police mainly composed of contingents currently serving in MICOPAX and to be re-hatted on 1 August. The Mission is mandated to contribute to (a) the protection of civilians and the restoration of security and public order, through the implementation of appropriate measures; (b) the stabilization of the country and the restoration of the authority of the central government; (c) the reform and restructuring of the defence and security sector; and (d) the creation of conditions conducive to the provision of humanitarian assistance to populations in need. The Peace and Security Council urged the Security Council, the European Union and bilateral partners to lend their full support to the African Union and ECCAS to facilitate the transformation of MICOPAX into the African-led International Support Mission and to ensure its effective functioning through the provision of the necessary financial, logistical and technical support.

16. On 16 May, the Peacebuilding Commission was briefed on the situation in the country. Members of the Central African Republic configuration expressed deep concern about the deterioration of the situation in the country, reflected in the lack of public safety and security, human rights violations and abuses, increased sexual violence, recruitment of child soldiers and severe humanitarian conditions. They also noted the risk of the instability in the Central African Republic spreading to the rest of the subregion. The Peacebuilding Commission stressed that restoring the rule of law and re-establishing constitutional order were the immediate priorities, which will facilitate further progress on the transition process and the delivery of assistance to improve humanitarian and socioeconomic conditions in the Central African Republic. The Peacebuilding Commission also suggested the possibility of a joint needs assessment mission, conducted by the United Nations, the European Union and the World Bank, as soon as the security situation in the country permits.

17. Meanwhile, activities funded by the Peacebuilding Fund in the Central African Republic remained suspended, following the decision made on 2 April to that effect as a consequence of the unconstitutional seizure of power, which represented a significant setback in the country's peacebuilding process. A review of this decision

will be made once constitutional order has been restored, or at such a time as the new authorities' commitment to peacebuilding is recognized.

B. Security and the rule of law

18. While May 2013 was relatively calm in the capital Bangui, June was marked by an increased number of abuses and incidents attributed to uncontrolled Séléka elements. These include looting, theft and burglaries: several homes were broken into and vehicles stolen. Cases of rape and other forms of sexual violence were also reported. Fighting among Séléka elements over looted or stolen goods was also reported. In Bangui, an increased presence of armed Séléka elements patrolling either on foot or on motorcycles was noted. Although the sporadic shooting that was so pronounced during the early days of Séléka occupation of Bangui declined significantly, there was a net increase in criminal activities due to the proliferation of small arms. There were also reports about the presence of explosive and anti-tank mines and stocks of ammunition, which were dug up from Damara and carried to Bangui by a team of Séléka elements.

19. Meanwhile, many elements of the national armed forces, the Forces armées centrafricaines, reported to duty at four different sites in Bangui (Mamika, Jeunesse pionnière nationale, École nationale de management and National Security Agency). Some of the remaining armed forces sought refuge in neighbouring countries (Cameroon, Congo and Democratic Republic of the Congo) with their weapons. Diplomatic efforts are being deployed to facilitate their voluntary repatriation.

20. Police officers who had been in hiding resumed their work, but the majority of them are still in civilian clothes and unarmed, as they fear for their personal safety. A few officers are patrolling in Bangui along with Séléka elements, while others are providing support to the judiciary system at the Office central de répression du banditisme, with very limited means. A deployment of police superintendents, along with the newly appointed *préfets*, has reportedly been planned.

21. Many gendarmes also reported to duty. Some of them have been deployed to strategic sites in Bangui, while others are supporting the judicial system at the Section de recherche et d'investigation, which was relocated to the gendarmerie headquarters, as Séléka is running a parallel service at the section's office. Specific units were set up to carry out crowd and riot control, but they are not yet effective for lack of means of transportation.

22. The police and the gendarmerie were instructed by the transitional authorities to integrate 500 Séléka elements each into their respective forces, including suspected foreign elements, without prior screening to determine their suitability. The integration process into the police faces another challenge because of the lack of proper facilities, as the Training School of the National Police is still occupied by a MICOPAX contingent.

23. Discussions are reportedly ongoing between the Séléka leadership and the rebel group Force démocratique du peuple centrafricain, led by Abdoulaye Miskine, on security arrangements.

24. While many of the Séléka elements continued to wreak havoc in the countryside, uncontrolled by their hierarchy, some were regrouped in six sites in Bangui, and others were allegedly "cantoned" in five locations upcountry (Berengo,

Bossembélé, Bria, Bambari and Bossangoa), without assistance from the international community. After the completion of the cantonment process, a confidence-building exercise is envisaged, which will bring the national armed forces and Séléka together to form new battalions. In order to operationalize this road map, mixed thematic groups composed of elements of Séléka and the armed forces will reportedly be put in place, to provide technical recommendations to be submitted to the Government for final decision. Given the presence of foreigners among Séléka elements, a disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, resettlement and reintegration process is anticipated to enable voluntary repatriation. Identifying those foreigners will constitute a daunting challenge, as the Séléka rebellion destroyed the State archives in almost all the prefectures as well as in Bangui.

25. It is also reportedly envisaged that some young Séléka elements would benefit from a professional training similar to the Jeunesse pionnière nationale, and would be redeployed in Yalinga, Haute-Kotto prefecture. At the same time, according to national plans, up to 15,000 Séléka elements would be integrated into the national army. It has been reported that an additional 800 elements are already being trained as Republican Guards by a private western security company.

C. Lord's Resistance Army

26. The reporting period was marked by tensions between Séléka, the Central African armed forces and the Ugandan contingent (UPDF) of the African Union Regional Task Force against the Lord's Resistance Army. On 24 May, a new armed group, the Mouvement de la marche populaire pour la démocratie centrafricaine (MMPDC), launched an attack against Obo, Haut-Mbomou prefecture. The national and the Ugandan forces captured 42 attackers, including nine who died in custody under circumstances that are unclear. MMPDC allegedly includes elements from the Central African Republic and South Sudan. As a result of the attacks, the UPDF contingent of the Regional Task Force stopped tracking the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and redeployed to Zémio in a defensive position, while Mr. Djotodia informed my former Special Representative for the Central African Republic of his intention to deploy additional Séléka troops to Obo.

27. From 6 to 11 June, my Special Representative for Central Africa, Abou Moussa, and the African Union Special Envoy on LRA, Ambassador Francisco Madeira, conducted a joint mission to the Central African Republic, Uganda and South Sudan. The purpose was to assess the situation and defuse tensions between Séléka, the Central African armed forces and the Ugandan troops in Obo, as well as to facilitate the resumption of the activities of the African Union Regional Task Force in the Central African Republic. In the Central African Republic, the United Nations-African Union mission received verbal assurances that the Regional Task Force could resume its operations. In Uganda, the authorities confirmed that the UPDF contingent would remain in a defensive position until formal assurances were provided. In South Sudan, the authorities confirmed that they were not involved in the MMPDC attack on Obo. On 18 June, Mr. Djotodia signed a statement reiterating his support for the Regional Task Force and welcoming the action of UPDF within this framework. Meanwhile, the African Union renewed the mandate of the African regional cooperation initiative against LRA, including the Regional Task Force, until May 2014.

28. The reporting period was also marked by an upsurge of activity reportedly linked to LRA. Since May 2013, BINUCA has received an increasing number of reports about the presence of suspected LRA elements in the prefecture of Haute-Kotto, especially along the axis Bria-Ouadda-Sam Ouandja, where diamond mining sites were being targeted. On 13 June, an armed group clashed with the villagers of Mouka in the vicinity of Bria, the capital of Haute-Kotto. The military clash resulted in the killing of 16 people, including 11 villagers of whom 6 were decapitated. The insurgents allegedly lost four fighters and set ablaze some 15 houses in the village, triggering the displacement of several villagers.

29. In addition, on 14 and 15 July, an important group of alleged LRA elements attacked two villages in the prefecture of Haut-Mbomou. The attack occurred when a large number of villagers had gathered for the funeral of an LRA victim, and resulted in the deaths of two people, the abduction of about 30 civilians and the ransacking and burning of the villages of Yangouchi, Bamara and Zouangadji.

D. Human rights protection

30. During the reporting period, human rights violations became more widespread. They included arbitrary arrests and detention, sexual violence against women and children, torture, rape, targeted killings, recruitment of child soldiers and attacks, committed by uncontrolled Séléka elements and unidentified armed groups throughout the country. The number of human rights violations was further compounded by the breakdown of law and order, particularly in the provinces, where Séléka elements continue to prey on the civilian population. In Bangui, lootings and plundering of homes, offices, businesses, and health-care facilities, as well as carjackings and armed robberies, are still ongoing, four months after the unconstitutional regime change. The pervasive impunity for the perpetrators of violence makes the situation even worse. This lack of accountability was aggravated by the virtual absence of any judicial authority outside Bangui, as well as the destruction of the criminal justice system infrastructure, including courts and detention facilities.

31. Much of what had been rebuilt over the years with the support of the international community, including the Peacebuilding Fund, was destroyed once again. In Bangui, there were reports of Séléka attacks against magistrates and lawyers in relation to verdicts and lawsuits filed against them. There were also reports of abuses committed by Séléka soldiers, who are serving as judges and prosecutors in the provinces. The magistrates who fled their jurisdictions after Séléka's offensive have yet to return.

32. The magnitude of the human rights violations was denounced by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights during her opening statement at the twenty-third session of the Human Rights Council in Geneva, on 27 May. She urged the national transitional authorities to take all necessary measures to protect civilians, to end the cycle of violence, and to hold accountable those responsible for these serious violations of human rights.

33. On 7 June, the Minister of Justice of the Central African Republic addressed the Human Rights Council. In his intervention he identified several priority areas for the transitional government related to (a) restoring peace and security; (b) addressing humanitarian needs including assisting internally displaced persons; (c) preparing

for the presidential and legislative elections in 18 months; (d) respecting human rights; (e) fighting impunity; (f) establishing judiciary reform; and (g) respecting international standards with regard to detention. In particular, he stated that the Government was committed to continuing work on the establishment of a national human rights commission; adopting before the end of the transition a law on the abolition of the death penalty; closing the prisons of Bossembélé and Camp de Roux, while ensuring that no illegal detention centre is created; supporting the Mixed Commission of Inquiry in charge of investigating crimes committed since 2004; and fighting sexual violence. He issued a standing invitation to Special Rapporteurs to visit the Central African Republic. The Minister of Justice also reaffirmed his country's commitment to continue working with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, to participate in the universal periodic review in October 2013 and to start working on transitional justice mechanisms.

34. Subsequently, the Human Rights Council adopted a resolution condemning all the violations of human rights and acts of violence perpetrated against the civilian population and calling on the transitional authorities to take all necessary steps to put an immediate stop to all acts of violence against the civilian population and to take all necessary steps to ensure that perpetrators are brought to justice. The Human Rights Council also requested the High Commissioner to submit to the Council, at its twenty-fourth session, an interim report on the human rights situation and, at its twenty-fifth session, a report evaluating the needs for technical assistance and capacity-building in the Central African Republic.

35. In response to international criticism on human rights, the transitional authorities took a series of actions and measures during the reporting period. They supported the establishment of the Mixed Commission of Inquiry, which is not yet operational, owing in part to outstanding questions about its powers and independence, as well as the impartiality and the competence of its members. In addition, the Government of the Central African Republic issued an international arrest warrant against former President François Bozizé; in May the Minister of Justice had requested the Public Prosecutor to investigate serious crimes under Bozizé's rule and his case has already been referred to the Mixed Commission of Inquiry.

36. During the last Cabinet reshuffle, the Prime Minister created a Ministry for Human Rights and Humanitarian Action, while the Ministry of Defence issued a standing invitation to BINUCA to visit prisons and detention centres throughout the country, particularly within the Section de recherche et d'investigation and in the Office central de répression du banditisme in Bangui. Notwithstanding these positive developments, the authorities of the Central African Republic blocked subsequent attempts by BINUCA to visit certain detainees at Camp de Roux. Dignitaries of the former regime were still prevented from leaving the country. Restrictions on the freedom of movement are also imposed on the general population through random checkpoints.

37. A number of activities were organized by the transitional authorities and non-governmental organizations to defuse tensions among the Christian and Muslim communities. On 27 May, Mr. Djotodia denied being the author of a letter in which he allegedly requested the assistance of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation to establish an Islamic republic in the Central African Republic. He strongly reaffirmed the secularism of his country. On 8 June he attended, with the Prime Minister and

his Government, a prayer meeting organized by women's groups in Bangui on the theme "Peace, security, welfare and tolerance between Christians and Muslims". During that gathering, he apologized for the suffering endured by women in particular as a result of Séléka's crimes, including looting, plundering, rape and summary executions. He then urged his Government to bring all perpetrators of human rights abuses to justice. On 10 and 11 June, a workshop funded by Mercy Corps, an American non-governmental organization and Christian group, in Bangui brought together about 40 participants from different religious groups to discuss the root causes of the ongoing political-military crisis facing the country and ways and means to address them. A road map was developed for a modus vivendi between the respective communities, which would enable them to resist the temptation of division and hatred orchestrated by extremist groups.

38. In order to address the root causes of the conflict, it will be necessary, for a durable peace process in the Central African Republic, to establish transitional justice mechanisms. With the support of BINUCA and the Subregional Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Central Africa, based in Yaoundé, discussions on this matter have started in Bangui. The Government of the Central African Republic is envisaging this modality as a complement to the Mixed Commission of Inquiry.

39. From 19 June to 11 July, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights dispatched a fact-finding mission consisting of five human rights investigators to gather evidence, independently and impartially, of human rights violations committed in Bangui and, if possible, in other parts of the country since December 2012. While the report is being finalized, the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights is conducting an official visit to the Central African Republic from 29 July to 2 August to discuss with the transitional authorities the human rights challenges in the country and the best way to address them.

E. Humanitarian situation

40. The humanitarian situation in the Central African Republic has continued to deteriorate significantly since December 2012, with a shift from a protracted humanitarian crisis towards a complex emergency. The Emergency Relief Coordinator, Valerie Amos, who visited the country on 11 and 12 July with the European Commissioner for International Cooperation, Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Response, Kristalina Georgieva, confirmed that all 4.6 million residents are currently affected by the conflict. The scale of the crisis is of great concern, with many people scattered in remote areas that are difficult to reach, including parts of the country where humanitarian partners were not previously present. About 1.6 million people are in dire need of assistance, including protection, food, health, water and sanitation and shelter. It is estimated that there are 206,000 internally displaced persons in the Central African Republic and that the current crisis prompted almost 60,000 people to flee to neighbouring countries; close to 41,000 of them are in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

41. The persistent crisis has exacerbated an already fragile humanitarian situation in the country, depleting the livelihoods of the people affected. The scarcity of basic goods and services has led to an increase in prices. The absence of local administrators from the interior of the country is contributing to a further deterioration of the humanitarian situation due to the closure of health facilities and

schools. More than 650,000 children across the country cannot access education because of the closure and occupation of schools. While teachers and administrators are present in some parts of the country, most parents are still afraid to send their children to school because of the continued presence of armed elements.

42. Insecurity remained the main challenge to humanitarian access, which is essential to provide life-saving assistance and to help preserve the human dignity of those affected by the crisis. The proliferation of weapons and the impunity with which armed actors operate continued to cause widespread fear among the people, preventing large numbers of internally displaced persons from returning to their homes.

43. From January to May 2013, an assessment of grave violations against children by armed forces and armed groups was conducted under the auspices of the Security Council monitoring and reporting mechanism, which was established pursuant to resolution 1612 (2005). In addition to other human rights violations noted in this report, the result of the assessment indicates that a large number of children have been recruited and used by Séléka.

44. Specifically, there are serious concerns about widespread recruitment of children by armed groups and militia since the beginning of the crisis in the Central African Republic, as well as the killing and maiming of children and sexual violence against children, especially girls. Protection cluster members targeted 500 children to be released. Of these, 28 per cent or 141 children, including 15 girls, have been released since 27 May, following ongoing discussions between the United Nations Children's Fund and the transitional government. Since 27 May, 160 children have been released following similar discussions.

45. More than 291 protection incidents were recorded by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs from March to June. Attacks against the population caused civilian deaths and injuries; arbitrary arrests, abductions and pillaging were a source of particular concern. In April more than 28 civilians were killed and over 57 injured, including children and women. Sexual violence is considered underreported because of its cultural sensitivity. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees nonetheless reported 1,408 cases of gender-based violence. In general, women and children have been most affected by the crisis.

46. The crisis also exacerbated the risk of food insecurity and worsened the already precarious food situation across the country. Reports indicate that households in the central, northern and eastern areas of the country will face a food crisis between now and the next harvest (September to December 2013). Meanwhile, households in southern and western areas will face high levels of food insecurity until the end of September. More than 12,000 children are already affected by acute malnutrition. Food security cluster members — the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Food Programme (WFP) — targeted 483,900 men and women for assistance; 217,285 or 45 per cent have been reached. About 8,009 cases of severe acute malnutrition received treatment. According to FAO and WFP, some 1,613,000 people require food and agricultural support.

47. With a nearly non-existent health system beyond that run by non-governmental organizations, there is a high risk of communicable diseases, such as cholera and

malaria. Many people were forced to flee and still live in the forest. This situation is compounded by poor sanitary conditions and the lack of access to clean water. Additional medical supplies such as medicines and surgical kits are urgently required, as well as fuel for generators. Basic drugs and hygiene products cannot be purchased locally owing to the breakdown of the supply chain.

48. The plight of some 66,395 people living with HIV/AIDS in the Central African Republic is of serious concern. Owing to the current political upheaval and insecurity, some 13,703 people under retroviral treatment are at risk of not receiving treatment, which could lead to additional deaths or resistance to drugs. Rape victims need access to medical and psychosocial help, thus making assistance and prevention packages highly necessary. In May 2013, health partners targeted 680,275 children under 5 for vaccinations against measles; 18 per cent or 122,869 have been vaccinated.

49. Assessments carried out under the rapid response mechanism indicate that there are dire humanitarian needs in the protection, health, food security and WASH (water, sanitation and hygiene) sectors. Humanitarian partners are providing assistance where the security situation allows. Extensive urgent life-saving assistance is required. The population's most basic health needs include access to emergency obstetric care, access to care for gender-based violence survivors, and treatment of injuries resulting from conflict, as well as care for the treatment of endemic diseases, epidemics and immunization. The WASH cluster is targeting 250,000 people affected by the crisis to receive water treatment, storage material and key hygiene supplies. As at 14 June, 15,902 people or 6 per cent of the affected population had received WASH assistance.

50. As at 26 July 2013, the Financial Tracking Service has registered 32 per cent of contributions for the 2013 consolidated appeal process, for a total revised requirement of US$ 195 million. A total of $62 million was allocated to the following clusters: coordination and support services; education; emergency shelter; emergency telecommunications; food security; health; logistics; multisector assistance to refugees; nutrition; protection; water, sanitation and hygiene. An additional $22.6 million has been provided to humanitarian actors outside the consolidated appeal process, including the International Committee of the Red Cross, Médecins sans Frontières and others.

51. The Humanitarian Coordinator has activated the common humanitarian fund for the Central African Republic to provide funding in response to the most critical needs. As at 20 June, the fund had received a $4,250,600 contribution from Ireland (Irish Aid) and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency. The Humanitarian Coordinator has approved four projects for a total amount of $2,924,000 from the emergency funds in the common humanitarian fund for immediate assistance in the sectors of health, nutrition, protection, food security and water, sanitation and hygiene.

52. The United Nations Humanitarian Air Service ensures safe access to 27 locations countrywide and is the sole means of transportation to reach most parts of the Central African Republic that are inaccessible because of very weak infrastructure, poor road conditions and insecurity. However, the Service is currently facing a funding shortfall of 69 per cent, requiring $8.9 million out of the total requirement of $13 million.

53. During their joint visit to the Central African Republic, the Emergency Relief Coordinator and the European Union Commissioner heard from all interlocutors that insecurity was the number one issue to be addressed. They visited Kaga Bandoro (Nana Grébizi prefecture, some 300 km north of Bangui), where non-governmental organizations underlined that improved security, the return of local civilian authorities, and continued support from the international community were their most pressing issues. They met with Mr. Djotodia and members of the transitional government and urged the authorities to guarantee that humanitarian organizations can carry out their programmes. While the European Union, already the leading donor to the Central African Republic, announced an additional contribution, much more international support is required both politically and financially to meet the vast and expanding needs of the people suffering from the current crisis.

F. Situation of United Nations staff and premises

54. United Nations personnel considered non-critical remained temporarily relocated during the reporting period. Early in June, international staff remaining in Bangui were authorized to move out of the BINUCA compound to better accommodation at a local hotel, thanks to improvements in the security situation. The international staff complement in Bangui increased from the initial 40 to 69.

55. The United Nations security management team decided on 17 July that United Nations staff should return to private residences in phases, starting with security officers who moved back to their residences on 20 July. The remaining international staff in the hotel were to return to their private residences by 30 July. Furthermore, the security management team decided that, if the security situation continues to improve, all international staff that were temporarily relocated outside of the Central African Republic should return to Bangui by 15 August, when normal operations are expected to resume. It is further expected that the BINUCA field offices outside Bangui may be reopened, pending the outcome of security assessments, which will be conducted between late July and mid-August. Most United Nations premises have been looted and some remain occupied by Séléka elements.

III. Observations

56. I remain deeply concerned about the current security situation in the Central African Republic, which is still characterized by a total breakdown in law and order, more than four months after the unconstitutional change of government on 24 March 2013. This is unacceptable. The plight of the people of the Central African Republic must be brought to an end. The situation requires urgent attention from the international community. The restoration of peace and security in Bangui and throughout the country is a priority. I call on the Security Council to consider appropriate options, including the adoption of sanctions or the establishment of a panel of experts, to ensure that there is no impunity for perpetrators of gross violations of human rights.

57. Some progress has been made with regard to the establishment of transitional institutions, in accordance with ECCAS decisions, including the nomination of a new Government of National Unity and the expansion of the membership of the National Transitional Council. I have already emphasized the need to ensure more

inclusivity in the transitional institutions that have been established. I now call on the Prime Minister and Mr. Djotodia to work together to urgently bridge their differences which, if unaddressed, may jeopardize the progress made thus far and seriously aggravate the crisis in the country. Moving forward, there will be a need to establish the remaining transitional institutions, including the Transitional Constitutional Court and the High Council on Communication. There will also be a need to agree on an election-specific road map to end the transition period.

58. I note with satisfaction the efforts made to mitigate the interreligious tensions between Christians and Muslims in the Central African Republic. I encourage all national stakeholders to pursue these efforts to prevent a further erosion of the social fabric that will be difficult to overcome.

59. I welcome the decision of the African Union to establish a new peace support operation, the African-led International Support Mission in the Central African Republic, with a robust mandate, based on the existing ECCAS contingents. I call on the African Union to ensure a regional balance of troops, to help to re-establish security in Bangui and throughout the country as soon as possible, and to include in the tasks of the Mission the protection of United Nations and international staff. I encourage the African Union and ECCAS to strengthen their joint efforts to operationalize the Mission. The United Nations stands ready to provide technical assistance to the regional organizations. I also encourage the Security Council to lend its full support to the Mission.

60. I am concerned about the recent upsurge in LRA activity in the Central African Republic, as a result of the security situation that prevails in the country. While I welcome the African Union decision to extend the mandate of the Regional Task Force until May 2014, I note that two separate peace support missions will be operating in the Central African Republic. I urge the African Union to ensure that an information-sharing and operational coordination mechanism is established between the African-led International Support Mission and the Regional Task Force.

61. The Government's intention to integrate a significant number of Séléka elements into the national security and defence forces without prior screening to determine their suitability raises serious concerns. While a disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, resettlement and reintegration process is anticipated for foreign combatants, it would be important to ensure the implementation of a comprehensive national disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process for all Central African combatants, including possible militia elements. The latter should also include the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of government forces in support of wider security sector reform efforts. It is also critical that appropriate vetting procedures are put in place to ensure that those who have committed violations of human rights, including sexual violence, are not integrated into the security forces.

62. The human rights situation in the Central African Republic remains a cause for grave concern as allegations of violations of international human rights and humanitarian law continue to be reported on a daily basis, in and outside Bangui. While the transitional authorities have taken some steps to address the situation, these have not been translated into reality on the ground, owing to the limited capacity of the transitional government to cope with the new situation. Threats to human rights defenders, violations of the freedom of movement, insecurity and the absence of law and order, in particular outside Bangui, reinforce the culture of

impunity and accentuate the vulnerability of an already very fragile civilian population. On the other hand, the lack of adequate resources, in particular to monitor and report on alleged human rights violations, further impedes the ability of the United Nations to adequately play its part in the protection of civilians in the Central African Republic.

63. Access to populations in need and funding remain the two main priorities for the humanitarian community to enable an adequate response to the overwhelming needs. More concerted efforts are required to alleviate the suffering of the population in the Central African Republic. The recent joint visit to the country of the Emergency Relief Coordinator and the European Union Commissioner for International Cooperation, Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Response has confirmed that the entire population of 4.6 million people is currently affected by the conflict. The visit has also helped to give more visibility to the plight of the people of the Central African Republic. I thank the European Union for announcing its latest generous contribution to the Central African Republic during this trip.

64. Wherever weapons systems have been deployed and utilized, it is likely that there are explosive remnants of war which pose a threat to the population. These explosive remnants of war are also a potential source of bulk explosive for the construction of improvised explosive devices. Their early removal and destruction should be considered a priority.

65. The United Nations will continue to engage and work closely with national stakeholders, including the Prime Minister and the National Transitional Council, as well as with ECCAS, the African Union and the international community, to help to restore constitutional order in the country as soon as possible. It is crucial to maintain a clear division of labour among all actors involved. The United Nations welcomes the establishment of the International Contact Group on the Central African Republic and stands ready to continue to work within this framework, in search of durable solutions to the crisis in the country.

66. I am pleased that United Nations staff have been able to start returning to the Central African Republic to support the population. Our presence in the country, not only in Bangui but also in the interior, is important to allow us to deliver on the four priorities that I have identified for the United Nations, namely, political dialogue; security and the rule of law; human rights promotion and protection; and humanitarian response. In view of the significant tasks and challenges ahead and the evolving situation in the Central African Republic, BINUCA will require increased capacity and additional resources to deliver in these priority areas.

67. I wish to thank and pay a special tribute to my former Special Representative, Margaret Vogt. I am grateful for her leadership and efforts to promote peace, security and development in the Central African Republic during her two-year tenure. I also wish to thank my new Special Representative, Lieutenant General (retd.) Babacar Gaye, for having accepted this challenging assignment and the staff of the United Nations system for their demonstrated and remarkable devotion and courage during this particularly difficult time.